

March 7, 2013

The Honorable Pat Roberts
U.S. Senate
109 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Heidi Heitkamp
U.S. Senate
G55 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sens. Roberts and Heitkamp :

The undersigned agricultural groups appreciate your leadership in introducing S. 485 to reduce the regulatory burdens for farmers and custom harvesters. S. 485 would exempt certain class A Commercial Drivers License (CDL) holders from the burdensome requirement of obtaining a Hazardous Material (HM) endorsement while transporting more than 118 gallons of diesel fuel.

Current federal law makes it very difficult for farmers and custom harvesters to transport the amount of fuel necessary for a single day of field operations with today's agricultural equipment. Class A CDL holders cannot haul more than 118 gallons of diesel fuel without an HM endorsement, which can be costly and time-consuming to obtain.

Some of today's farm equipment, such as large combines and cotton pickers, have fuel tank capacities of 250 gallons or more. Restricting a farmer or harvester to hauling only 118 gallons at a time forces them to make multiple trips to refuel. This is a waste of valuable time and money during the busiest time of the year.

Your legislation would allow agricultural producers, custom harvesters, agricultural retailers, agricultural business employees and agricultural cooperative employees with Class A CDLs to haul up to 1,000 gallons of diesel fuel if the service vehicle is clearly marked with a label reading "Diesel Fuel," without having to obtain an HM endorsement. This bill is similar to existing exemption for drivers with Class B Restricted CDLs (§383.3 (f)(3)(v)).

S. 485 would help the agricultural industry operate more efficiently and recognize the needs of modern production agriculture. We appreciate your efforts and encourage other members of Congress to support you in this effort.

Sincerely,

Agricultural & Food Transporters Conference
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Soybean Association
Association of Equipment Manufacturers
Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association
Kansas Cooperative Council
Kansas Grain & Feed Association
Montana Grain Growers Association
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association

National Corn Growers Association
National Sorghum Producers
National Sunflower Association
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Custom Harvesters, Inc.
U.S. Dry Pea & Lentil Council